

University of Worcester Learning and Teaching Conference
A Community of Learning



17th – 18th June 2024

Abstracts

#UWLTC24

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Introduction and Welcome

This year's [University Learning and Teaching Conference](#), has 'A Community of Learning' as its central theme and we are delighted to confirm that we have three fantastic keynote speakers supporting this year's event.

Dr Brian Nyatanga, Senior Lecturer for the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery and Chair of the University's Decolonisation Steering Group will be providing an insightful journey into his past and why it brings so much meaning to his role in decolonisation. The title of his presentation will be "Towards a decolonial curriculum."

Our second keynote speaker is Darius Pocha, a former student of the University of Worcester and now a highly successful entrepreneur who sits on the University's Board of Governors. His presentation will focus on 'Embracing change: from student to Governor to the future of work,' as he reflects on how his journey to date has led him to become a co-founder of a technology consultancy that now advises the Government and education sector on digital transformation and the application of Artificial Intelligence in public policy.

And finally, we are delighted to confirm that Professor Susie Schofield from the University of Dundee will be joining us to share her insights into "Developing a community of learners: the snakes and ladders of academia." Professor Schofield's presentation will focus on the importance of developing an early sense of belonging among students to maximize retention and support student success. It will provide practical examples of how different innovative approaches can achieve this, including the development of a Sense of Belonging toolkit for tutors, through a collaborative project funded by QAA Scotland.

Presentations will focus on the 2023/24 University of Worcester priorities of 'closing the loop' on student feedback, supporting mental health and pastoral care, and developing assessment practice. While the conference has a learning and teaching focus, student support, retention and continuation will also be explored.

Being a University of Worcester student in 2024 and exploring how learning and teaching will need to adapt to accommodate rapidly changing digital worlds, will be weaved throughout the day.

Keynote Speakers

Darius Pocha

Title: Embracing Change: From Student to Governor to the Future of Work

Darius Pocha is co-founder of Create/Change, a technology consultancy that advises the Government and education sector on digital transformation. He graduated from the University of Worcester (UoW) in 1997 with First Class Honours in Art & Design with Psychology.

Darius has advised Department for Education on FE/HE and adult skills policy, including the design of T-Levels and the National Skills Fund. He is supported UCL's CAPE (Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement) programme on the application of AI in public policy and has been a technical advisor to Pearson on the design and development of new technology qualifications.

In addition, Darius is a Trustee of the Royal Female School of Art Foundation, a grant-making charity which aims to widen access to the arts and creative professions.

Professor Susie Schofield

Title: Developing a Community of Learners: The Snakes and Ladders of Academia

Susie joined the University of Dundee as a mature student after a career break, intending to do a one-year Master's, in Applied Computing before going back into industry. The Master's morphed into a Research Assistant post on an educational technology project, then a PhD. One year later, the Medical School was advertising for a Staff Development Officer – someone with an educational background and experience in administration and communication (skills which were developed over 15 years working as a software consultant), an excellent match. Moving to part-time PhD studies, was to give her useful insight later when co-developing the Professional Doctorate, Dundee's interprofessional doctoral programme, which is aimed at professionals combining doctoral level study with work.

Since then, she has developed an international reputation in Medical Education, and across the University through her expertise in Distance Learning and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. She is passionate about faculty development and change management, giving agency to all stakeholders including students, administrative staff, academics, and managers.

She is now Interim Director of CME (Centre for Medical Education), School of Medicine's Associate Dean Quality and Academic Standards and University Distance Learning Lead. Throughout, she has been known for her humor and cheerful resilience, the latter she says developed through being a life-long supporter of Luton Town Football Club.

Dr Brian Nyatanga

Title: Towards a Decolonial Curriculum

Having been raised under an apartheid regime in Africa, Brian is keen to ensure equality, fairness and justice prevail in anything he is involved with, both at work and socially. Brian is aware how knowledge has the power to liberate and moving to teach/research in Higher Education Institutions was important for the advancement of his own and others knowledge base.

Brian's research interest lies in health care and palliative care. Most of the research he has conducted employed qualitative methodologies, although his doctoral thesis was quantitative based. This was borne out of a desire to understand both paradigms, and how they influence decisions, care, and choices we make on behalf of people who are approaching the end of their lives. Recent studies have employed qualitative interviewing techniques to elicit people's experiences and perceptions of different situations they encounter either as patients, family members or health care professionals.

Brian is passionate about creating a learning environment that liberates both the oppressor and the learner, and his interest towards decolonial learning helps to redress the past to achieve a better and brighter future world for all.

Poster submissions

Evaluation of Responses from a Multi-Professional Cohort of Independent Prescribers (Theme: Improving Students Retention and Continuation) - Gurpreet Kaur and Matthew Harris - Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery

To undertake an independent prescribing (IP) course, all applicants are required to secure suitable supervision in the workplace with a nominated designated prescribing practitioner (HCPC, 2019; HEE, 2024; NMC, 2023 and RPS, 2019). There poses a challenge in the current NHS with supervisors' capacity, lack of remuneration for this role, and the prolonged duration of supervision required, all which can result in student retention issues at postgraduate level (HEE, 2024; Rothwell, *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, once qualified, IPs in the acute sector locally report seeking professional development opportunities in their new roles which aligns with their prescribing practice challenging, especially in view of the fact, that this should encompass that which is wider than the clinical pillar as an advanced practitioner (HEE, 2017; RPS, 2021). This provided an opportunity to develop a bespoke workshop(s) and subsequent retention of learners. By responding to requests from the acute trust of staff training needs, it is anticipated that the workshop(s) will support staff retention also within the acute trust as part of the wider NHS Long Term Plan (NHSE 2019). Delegates of the workshop(s) will also be the supervisors for future prescribers, and therefore, enable applicants to enroll onto the IP course and support future prescribing capacity in the current workforce (HEE 2024; RPS 2019 & 2021).

A workshop was delivered to the acute trust for IPs from an array of professional backgrounds and clinical competencies, which provided a challenge to those designing and facilitating training, as well as supporting interprofessional learning (WHO 2010). A common regulatory requirement for all IPs is, to demonstrate competence against the standards as published within the RPS Competency Framework for All Prescribers (RPS 2021). An evaluation was completed which demonstrated success in the workshop delivery and highlighted future considerations. In addition, the prescribing module team utilised a range of pedagogical approaches to embed the RPS Competency Framework for All Prescriber (RPS, 2021). The evaluation results are presented for consideration of future continual professional development delivery.

References:

HCPC (2019). *Standards for prescribing*. [online] Available at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-relevant-to-education-and-training/standards-for-prescribing/> (Accessed: 15 March 2024).

Health Education England (2017). *Multi-professional framework for advanced clinical practice in England*. [online] Available at: <https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/multi-professional-framework-for-advanced-clinical-practice-in-england/> (Accessed: 15 March 2024).

Health Education England. (2024). *Becoming a designated prescribing practitioner*. [online] Available at: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/pharmacy/transforming-pharmacy-education-training/initial-education-training-pharmacists-reform-programme/pharmacy-integration-programme-super/dpp-2> (Accessed: 15 March 2024).

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Rothwell, C. *et al.* (2021). Enablers and Barriers to Effective Clinical Supervision in the Workplace: a Rapid Evidence Review. *BMJ Open*, [online] 11(9), pp.1–10. Available at: <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/11/9/e052929>. (Accessed: 15 March 2024)

Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2019). *Designated Prescribing Practitioner Competency Framework*. Available at: <https://www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/designated-prescribing-practitioner-competency-framework> (Accessed: 15 March 2024).

Royal Pharmaceutical Society (2021). *A competency framework for all prescribers*. Available at: <https://www.rpharms.com/resources/frameworks/prescribing-competency-framework/competency-framework>(Accessed: 15 March 2024).

World Health Organization (2010). *Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice Health Professions Networks Nursing & Midwifery Human Resources for Health*. [online] Available at: https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/70185/WHO_HRH_HPN_10.3_eng.pdf?sequence=1 (Accessed: 15 March 2024).

Applying Text Mining to Understand NSS comments

(Theme: 'Closing the loop' on student feedback) – Peter Clews - Worcester Business School

Each year graduating students are asked to complete the National Students Survey, which provides the university valuable feedback on how they have found their experience of studying at UoW. Much of this feedback is contained in text responses and contains elements they liked, disliked and what they valued or would change. The purpose of this project is to determine if applying text mining allows greater understanding of this feedback and provide insight into trends which emerge. It applied a 'bag of words' approach which focused on uni-gram analysis to identify key terms and themes within the NSS feedback for the academic year 2023/24.

Designing Resources for Online Collaborative Learning on a Medical Programme – The Student Voice

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Professor Rachel Ashworth, Dr Elizabeth Walden, DaHyun Chung, Deema Alyousuf, Jemima Marsden, Muthukumaraswamy Thirumalaiappan, Samali Pathira Kankanange - Three Counties Medical School

The aim of the project is to create student-centred online resources to support self-directed learning on the MBChB programme. The MBChB at Three Counties Medical School (TCMS) is a new graduate entry medical degree, centred around problem-based learning (PBL). The PBL model, with an emphasis on collaborative, student centred, self-directed learning, is widely used in medical education (1). This educational approach has been shown to develop key skills in preparation for practice and furthermore, students enjoy this style of autonomous, inquiry-led learning (2). However, PBL is different from traditional classroom teaching, requiring resources that support self-directed group learning outside the classroom. Results of our initial survey (84% response rate) revealed that videos and podcasts that summarise medically related information, ranked mostly highly as useful for weekly learning in preparation for PBL. Question banks, flash cards and the ability to practice questions were

rated most useful for exam preparation. A total of 29 (out of 32 respondents) customise and make their own study materials. Curriculum areas that ranked most highly for inclusion in the development of new online resources were psychosocial, anatomy, and public health. Based on the results of the survey resources will be generated and shared with students via our VLE (Blackboard). The extent to which resources supported student learning will be reassessed at the end of the academic year. By generating online learning resources to support self-directed learning from a student perspective we hope to create innovative tools that can be shared more widely within the educational community.

References:

1. Trullàs et al. Effectiveness of problem-based learning methodology in undergraduate medical education: a scoping review. *BMC Medical Education* (2022) 22:104.
2. Jones RW. Problem-based learning: description, advantages, disadvantages, scenarios and facilitation. *Anaesth Intensive Care*. 2006 Aug;34(4):485-8.

'Ask a PAL': A Pilot Mentoring Programme for UK Undergraduate Nursing Students

(Theme: Improving Students Retention and Continuation) – Samantha Meredith, Ben Hooper, Grace Tresadern, Susan Thomas - Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery

Background: Limited evidence-base supports use of Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) in Higher Education (HE) nursing programmes, for improvement of students practical and communication skills, academic performance, and retention (Gafni-Latcher *et al.*, 2021; Kachare, *et al.*, 2020; Alobaid, *et al.*, 2023; Cheraghi, *et al.*, 2021; Gehreke, Schilling, and Kauffield, 2024). There is no apparent single design for a successful PAL programme or full understanding of the long-term benefits of PAL in HE (Clarke, Williamson, and Stebbings, 2021; Nowell, *et al.*, 2017). Yet improving student experience and retention rates remain HE priorities (Gehreke, Schilling and Kauffeld, 2024; Ford, 2021; Hambridge, *et al.*, 2023). PAL offers one solution, benefitting both HE and nursing students, nursing profession too, with development of leadership skills (Rosenau, *et al.*, 2015) and improved student nursing skills, and retention, for future qualified nurses. There remains a need for high-quality research evidence-base of PAL in HE nursing-programmes.

Method: This pilot study of 'Ask a PAL' programme will be trialled over one-year with First-Year Undergraduate Nursing students; international students and home-based students, using recruited Third-Year students as PAL mentors. the aim is to create a long-term structured programme of PAL sessions (4 per academic year, face-to-face) supported by continued online support PRN for mentees using Microsoft teams.

Results: Outcomes to be measured include academic performance; achievements; Clinical and Academic Skills Evaluation; Self-Efficacy; Social Congruence; Anxiety; Stress; Mood; Coping and Mentee/Mentor feedback on "Ask a PAL" programme.

Conclusion: This pilot study will pave the way for a long-term study and 'Ask a PAL' service at University of Worcester. To create a high-quality longitudinal evidence-base to support a PAL programme that improves nursing students experience of undergraduate study.

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4. Cheraghi, F. *et al.* (2021) The effect of peer support approach on communication skills of nursing students in pediatric clinical setting, *Nurse Education in Practice*, 52, p.102984.
5. Gehreke, L., Schilling, H. and Kauffeld, S. (2024) Effectiveness of peer mentoring in the study entry phase: A systematic review, *Review of Education*, 12(1), p.e3462.
6. Clarke, D., Williamson, G. and Stebbings, A. (2021) A Systematic Review and Narrative Synthesis of the Effectiveness of Peer-Faculty-led Simulation for Clinical Skills Acquisition in Undergraduate Student Nurses, MSc Project Findings, *The Open Nursing Journal*, 15(1).
7. Ford, M. (2021) *Analysis: Student numbers rise but retention challenges remain*, Nursing Times. Available at: <https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/education/analysis-student-numbers-rise-but-retention-challenges-remain-30-08-2021/> (Accessed 11th March 2024).
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10. Rosenau, P. A. *et al.* (2015) Developing future nurse educators through peer mentoring, *Nursing: Research and Reviews*, pp.13-21.

Monday 17th June 2024

A: Presentations (13:00-14:00)

Exploring the Notion of Differentiation, and the Strategies Utilised, Within One UK HEI Health and Social Care Department

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Nathan Caswell-Price, Joanne Rouse - School of Allied Health and Community

Background - Differentiation strategies are considered an imperative aspect of education within the primary and secondary settings; however, differentiation appears to be widely underutilised within contemporary HEI settings, in favour of the UDL approaches to education which appear synonymous with contemporary education initiatives. This presentation explores the notion of differentiation within one UK HEI department, offering an insight into the theoretical and practical merits of applying such strategies to HEI classrooms. This research project created a workshop based on staff's predisposed knowledge concerning differentiation, to develop a training package which supported staff to establish effective strategies as part of their learning and teaching delivery.

Methods – A qualitative approach was employed to explore both the preconception of differentiation and post-workshop confidence in supporting learner diversity within an HEI classroom. Online questionnaires were utilised, and thematic analysis employed to analyse data sub-sets.

Findings – Staff reported significantly higher levels of confidence in managing the diverse needs of learners following participation within the differentiation strategies workshop.

Conclusion - This research piece advocates for a wider dissemination of training around differentiation strategies to empower lecturers to meet the diverse needs of learners within classrooms, emphasising the importance of evidence-based research in enhancing learning and teaching provisions across the HEI sector.

The EnFA Project: Enhancing Feedback and Assessment

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Rachel Kyte, Dr Terri Grant, Hannah Harrison, Matthew Osbourne - School of Allied Health and Community

Aims: This SAP project aims to explore Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT) student perspectives of:

- 1) How can we make assessment criteria clearer?
- 2) What makes marking and assessment fair?
- 3) How can we ensure feedback helps you improve your work?

Rationale: Strengthening communication and student support are university priorities. Feedback is an important component of this and should enable students to realise their academic potential. The SAHC scored significantly under the UoW average in the assessment and feedback metric in the 2022-23 NSS, with OT and PT reporting the most significant reductions in their scores.

Method: A participatory action research approach was chosen to empower students and ensure active engagement in data collection and analysis and enable co-production of an action plan to improve

practice. Two students were recruited through the SAP scheme and are leading focus groups to explore student perspectives on assessment and feedback. Ethical approval has been granted by the Health and Sciences Research Ethics Panel.

Results: Data collection is currently in progress and will have been completed before the conference. The focus group data will be thematically analysed and used to develop an action plan to help improve assessment and feedback practices. The results will be of interest to any colleagues wanting to explore student perspectives on assessment and feedback and how this can be improved. The students will be co-presenting at the conference and will also reflect on their experiences of the SAP scheme and the skills they have developed.

Closing the Loop: Improving Student Satisfaction in Interprofessional Learning

(Theme: 'Closing the loop' on student feedback) - Anna Billingham, Anneka McGee - School of Science and the Environment, School of Allied Health and Community

This presentation explores the changes made to 'Teamwork for Professional Practice', a shared module delivered to Physiotherapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) students. Interprofessional learning and collaboration is at this modules' core and is incorporated into the teaching and assessment to facilitate professional competencies and graduate attributes (Shakhman *et al.*, 2020). Initial module evaluation suggested poor student satisfaction overall (11%). The structure of the module and assessment of learning outcomes were highlighted as problematic, it was imperative these were addressed in future iterations to 'close the loop' on feedback and strengthen communication with students. The practice of giving and receiving feedback is a professional skill, one which the tutors felt was important to embrace and implement to align with the module's ethos.

Tutors utilised strategies to improve student satisfaction included changing the placement of the module within the academic year and amending the assessment strategy of the learning outcomes to ensure constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003).

Following two academic years of these changes, module evaluations show student satisfaction has increased to 86%. Feedback suggested students appreciate "sharing the responsibility of an assignment with others...learning more about myself as a team member" as well "thank you for bringing us back early for this module to take the pressure off later in the semester".

Listening to student feedback along with applying the 'closing the loop' process has demonstrated effective changes to support the delivery and assessment of this module which has consequently improved student feedback.

References:

Biggs, J. B. (2003). *Teaching for quality learning at university*. 2nd edition. Buckingham: Open University Press/Society for Research into Higher Education.

Shakhman, L. M. *et al.* (2020). Interprofessional Education and Collaboration: Strategies for Implementation. *Oman Medical Journal*, 35(4), e160. <https://doi.org/10.5001/omj.2020.83>

B: Presentations (13:00-14:00)

Exploring the Effects of Integrating Implicit Bias Within a Learning Community

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Dr April Smith – University of Portsmouth

This project to be presented, delves into the effects of integrating implicit bias into curricular interventions for 80 second year undergraduate criminology students. Implicit bias, characterised by unconscious assumptions, significantly influences perceptions and behaviours. This project is driven by two primary objectives. Firstly, it underscores the role of academic institutions in fostering inclusive learning environments. Secondly, it seeks to broaden our understanding of embedding implicit bias within curricula. This project acknowledges the challenge of measuring reductions in implicit bias due to its unconscious nature. However, evidence suggests that embedding implicit bias raises awareness, which in turn, offers confidence in employing strategies to mitigate biases. This project measures the impact of implicit bias integration on students' confidence levels in recognising, defining, and addressing bias via completion of a pre and post module survey, which bridges the gap between theory and practice by informing curriculum design and enhancing educational practices. These findings have implications for creating inclusive learning environments.

Enhancing Employability, Skills and Outcomes for History Students: A Students as Academic Partners Project

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Dr Anna Muggeridge, Professor Suzanne Schwarz, Ella Hart, Poppy Savory – School of Humanities

As History Employability Tutors, we were keen to rethink employability and careers provision within our course. We wanted to know what History students thought about current provision, and where and how it might be improved. Further, we recognised the significance of ensuring that students' voices were heard in this process, and that we centred the requirements of students on the course.

We were therefore, delighted to be awarded funding for a SAP project, in which current students would be employed to informally interview other History students, about their thoughts on existing careers support; how employability could be further embedded into the curriculum and through wider activities such as Careers Days or guest lectures, and how they manage balancing their studies with paid, casual work and/or internships, work experience and voluntary activities.

The project has two key aims: to promote employability and enhance student outcomes in the B3 data and to promote the inclusion of student voices in History by actively seeking student feedback on, and input into, careers and employability provision within the Department. Improvements in B3 data will be measurable in future Student Outcomes' surveys (over a projected 5-year period) and improvements in student voice will be measurable in future National Student Survey responses (from 2023/24).

This presentation will firstly, provide a very brief overview of our findings (interviews to take place in April 2024). Secondly, and more significantly, our student interviewers Ella Hart and Poppy Savory will reflect on their experiences as interviewers.

To What Extent Does the Undergraduate Paramedic Science Degree Prepare Graduates for Practice?

(Theme: 'Closing the loop' on student feedback) - Mark Gillet - School of Allied Health and Community

Background

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) regulate Paramedic practice. Since 2021 they have stipulated that to register, a student must have completed a level 6 qualification, such as a Bachelor of Science with honours (BSc Hons)(HCPC, 2023). Although the HCPC (2023) require courses to meet Standards of Proficiency (SOPS) and Standards of Education and Training (SETS) (2017) universities are free to design and deliver their courses as they see fit (subject to approval by the HCPC). The paramedic science BSc (Hons) has been running at UoW since 2018.

Methods

This research used a qualitative approach to answer the question; To what extent does the undergraduate paramedic science degree prepare graduates for practice? Ethical approval was gained. Semi-structured online interviews were conducted with participants until saturation was reached (n=5). Inductive thematic analysis was conducted to produce themes and subthemes.

Findings

Graduates felt prepared for practice on an ambulance, however findings showed that further input on catalyst event cases (such as trauma) and the integration of theory and practice would greatly improve new graduates' experiences. The impact of learning styles such as on-line learning due to COVID-19 and the consistency of a stable staff team were all significant themes from the data.

Conclusion

The undergraduate paramedic science degree at UoW prepared graduates for practice. However, the changing nature of the profession, learning styles and bridging the gap needs to be considered when developing new curricula, to ensure needs of patients are met by proficient graduates.

C: Presentations (13:00-14:00)

Exploring Analogy Method Principles in Crafting Teacher-Created Storytelling Examples for Teaching Statistics

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Dr Erkan Demirbas - University of Lincoln

This presentation aims to present a case study on crafting Teacher-Created Storytelling Examples for Teaching Statistics using the analogy methodology. The stages involved in developing a storytelling narrative with a cartoon character named "The Hatman" will be explained. The Hatman storytelling example is designed to teach Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), a widely used statistical method in fields such as economics, finance, and social sciences, for analysing relationships between variables and making predictions based on data. This example targets students who have not studied maths and statistics beyond post-16 education, aiming to support their learning and aid teachers in delivering effective classes.

The principles of the analogy method, pioneered by Gentner (1983), underpin the crafting of the Hatman example. Analogy method is primarily employed in teaching and learning to draw parallels between familiar and unfamiliar topics, facilitating comprehension.

Developing teacher-created storytelling examples involves constructing narratives with integrated components and clear causal and logical connections within the story. Furthermore, these narratives must proficiently convey valuable information. These principles are essential for meeting the criteria established by Gentner (1983) for effective analogies.

At the University of Lincoln, The Hatman storytelling example and cartoon have gained recognition among students. Feedback suggests that students find it easy to associate the concept of OLS with the image and storyline presented in the cartoon.

Reference:

Gentner, D. (1983). Structure Mapping Theory. *Cognitive Science*, 7(2), 155–170.

Bringing the Student Voice into University Consent Training

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Dr Gill Harrop -
School of Psychology

While most students believe they have a good understanding of consent, research in this area suggests that they often struggle to explain it fully or understand the nuances which can affect the presence or absence of consent, such as context and capacity. This presentation will consider the importance of understanding student perspectives on consent, including how consent is defined within universities, assumptions of consent in sexual settings, and perceptions of consent as a 'negotiated transaction'. Potential barriers will be discussed, including the perceived separation of consent and 'romance', the taboo nature of discussions around sex and consent, and what role online communications plays in student perceptions of consent. Strategies will be suggested for bringing the student voice into university consent training to ensure that it is tailored to their specific needs.

From Old to New Paradigm Thinking: Engaging Students in the Feedforward Process

(Theme: 'Closing the loop' on student feedback) - Karen Broughton, Debra Price - School of Sport and
Exercise Science

Previous focus within the School of Sport and Exercise Science on assessment processes has concentrated upon the quality and timing of feedback and the design of appropriate curricula to facilitate effective feedback processes. However, according to Winstone and Carless (2020) this previous focus could be described as 'old paradigm thinking', where feedback is focused upon the quality of teacher comments (in isolation), quality assurance and student satisfaction. Instead of a move towards new paradigm thinking, which is concerned with what students do with the feedback and the design of feedback processes for impact on student learning beyond the task at hand (Carless, 2015).

The impetus for this came about through successive Course Experience Surveys with Physical Education and Physical Education & Sports Coaching students continually rating assessment lower compared to other metrics. It has been an ongoing focus in the course Annual Evaluation Reports.

This project aimed to reframe and refocus students towards what they could do with the feedback and how it could be used, as a feedforward tool within a mandatory Level 4 module and across their other L4 modules. It is the start of an ongoing two-year project aimed at gaining further qualitative opinions on what and how students currently engage with their feedback, alongside reframing how feedback is used, whilst using a new L4 module to redesign the feedback process.

References:

Carless, D. (2015). *Excellence in University Assessment: Learning from Award-Winning Practice*. London: Routledge.

Winstone, N. E. and Carless, D. (2020). *'Designing Effective Feedback Processes in Higher Education: A Learning-Focused Approach'*. London: Routledge

A: Presentations (15:00-16:00)**Attendance and Retention Interventions in Worcester Business School**

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Helen Watts, Peter Clews, Kaylyn Cater – Worcester Business School

Attendance and retention are challenging and complex issues across the university requiring a student-centric approach. At Worcester Business School, the Retention Working Group has been 1) developing a more efficient and effective attendance monitoring process, 2) improving communications with students, and 3) conducting analyses on the relationships between attendance and retention. Within our presentation, we will share the lines of enquiry that have been guiding the group (balancing surveillance with solutions), our processes for monitoring attendance, and our plan for communicating with applicants and students. We will also share findings of statistical analyses that have explored the efficacy of different communication methods in driving attendance (at meetings and at teaching sessions), as well as the relationship between attendance levels and likelihood of withdrawal, and how attendance affects submission. We will also present our views on actions that could be taken to increase the organisational learning in relation to retention.

A Monthly Article Club - Creating Intrigue, Developing Interest and Growing Intelligence

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Dave Woodward - Institute of Education

Navigating the nuances of professional and postgraduate studies can be challenging for both staff and students, especially in a PGCE program. As a course leader for secondary physical education, I have faced the challenge of balancing professional requirements with academic excellence in postgraduate study. Moreover, the complexity of a nine-month course with a significant portion of time off-campus and on placement, can present challenges to supporting students academically and maintaining regular communication.

To overcome these challenges, I decided to implement a monthly article club. The club aimed to be intriguing and intellectually stimulating, offering students an opportunity to engage with thought-provoking content and deepen their understanding of concepts and ideas. This intellectual challenge is a critical part of the academic journey.

The club's premise was simple: I selected additional and challenging papers in Physical Education to be sent monthly. During that month, students were encouraged to read and reflect upon what spoke to them and link the paper to their practice. The initiative has grown each year, and I am continuously learning with the different cohorts that come through. In this presentation, I aim to explain my rationale, share its impact on the students, and develop the next steps for future learning.

Developing the Skills Curriculum for Student Mental Health Nurses and Foundation Degree Students

(Theme: 'Closing the loop' on student feedback) - Dave Robson, Aisha Baig, Tom Edwards -
Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery

Our Students as Academic Partners project aimed to collect information about appropriate mental health skills for student nurses from a range of mental health (MH) stakeholders. Module evaluation highlighted that mental health nursing students felt they required skills and simulation learning to be tailored more to their learning needs.

Focus group interviews were utilised to gather data from student mental health nurses, trainee nurse associates, skills tutors, and lecturers. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data was analysed using thematic analysis.

The data highlighted the need for a revised nursing curriculum to balance mental and physical health skills. Suicide training, communication skills, and scenario-based training are also emphasized as necessary for mental health nursing competence. Collaboration with practitioners and realism in simulation environments is deemed crucial. Training in mental health assessment and recovery-oriented approaches is advocated.

After the completion of the SAP project, a year 1 MH senior lecturer met with skills and MH colleagues to look at the findings and enhance the MH course. Three main outcomes have been implemented in the year 1 MH module so far: (1) MH Assessment tool simulation each day. (2) Flexible patient scenarios to address more diverse clients and improve personal interest. (3) Patchwork text sessions: increased time to read about MH tools and background theories and create notes on a themed patch. These three SAP-inspired innovations are being implemented in April / May 2024 for review in Summer 2024.

B: Presentations (15:00-16:00)

Final Year Pre-registration Nursing Students Views of Teaching Excellence

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Dr Kay Norman, Sophie Timmins, Peter Houghton – Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery

Literature suggests that student retention is enhanced by student engagement with their studies (Hamshire 2018). Students are seen as part of the solution to enhance teaching excellence, having a meaningful voice to inform teaching and learning activity. This project gathered student views of teaching excellence drawn from their three years of study.

An anonymous MS Forms qualitative survey consisting of 5 open ended questions was distributed to one cohort of final year BSc (Hons) pre-registration nursing students which included adult, mental health, and child fields. The qualitative survey approach is drawn from Braun *et al.* (2021) and provides a simple method to collect anonymous feedback. Ethical approval was granted by University of Worcester ethics committee.

64 students completed the survey (25% response rate). Five overarching themes emerged from responses: interactive learning; assessment related content; practice/lived experiences; pre/post-session learning activities; student support.

Findings will be discussed as part of the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery strategy for ongoing improvement in teaching and learning delivery to increase retention/continuation. The final report, including recommendations, will be relayed to students via the staff student course liaison committee.

References:

Braun, V. *et al.* (2021) The online survey as a qualitative research tool. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 24, 6, p 651-654

Hamshire, C. *et al.* (2019) The wicked problem of healthcare student attrition. *Nursing Inquiry*, 26, p1-8

'Collective Capacity': How the Peer-Supported Review of Teaching Can Strengthen Collaboration and Enhance a 'Support Challenge' Culture

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Charlotte Ross, Dr Rachael Paige- Institute of Education

Fullan (2010) describes collective capacity as enabling 'ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things' (p74) by making innovative and effective practice accessible and promoting collaboration. Viewing professional development (PD) in this way challenges some traditional approaches to an 'off the peg' approach. PD in Higher Education (HE) can be varied and the shift to recognising that effective PD is not 'done to' a group through a didactic approach (King, 2015) but how peer learning can promote development to positively impact the student experience. The Peer-Supported Review of Teaching (PSRT) has the potential to develop confidence in HE practitioners (Hendry *et al.*, 2021) alongside raising awareness of the impact of learning and teaching activity. The UoW PSRT policy looks to encourage the development of colleagues' knowledge and practice through a supportive, collaborative process (University of Worcester, 2020). The Institute of Education (IoE) is exploring the benefits of the PSRT as an approach to PD, to maximise the 'support challenge' (Day and Blakey, 2021) culture that enables colleagues to flourish. The importance of "scholarly dialogue" in PSRT has been documented in nursing education (Tighe and Bradshaw, 2013, p. 1347) whilst Hendry *et al.* (2021) note that colleagues value the opportunity to see practice through an alternative lens as a reviewer. Providing colleagues with a PD structure encouraging autonomy, responsibility and an opportunity to follow personal interest are underpinning principles of the IoE approach to PSRT. This presentation will explore how the IoE have structured their PSRT to enable these characters in its PD offer.

References:

Blakey, J. and Day, I. (2021) *Challenging Coaching: Going beyond traditional coaching to face the FACTS*. London: Nicholas Brearley Publishing.

Fullan, M. (2010) in Barber, M., Chijoke, C, and Mourshed, M. (2010). *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better*. McKinsey and Company.

Hendry, G. D. *et al.* (2021) 'It's hard to grow when you're stuck on your own': enhancing teaching through a peer observation and review of teaching program, *International Journal for Academic Development*, 26:1, 54-68, DOI: [10.1080/1360144X.2020.1819816](https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2020.1819816)

King, H (2015) Continuing Professional Development in Higher Education: what do academics do? *Planet*, 13:1, 26-29.

Tighe, S. M. and Bradshaw, C., (2013) Peer-supported review of teaching: making the grade in midwifery and nursing education. *Nurse Education Today*, 33(11), pp.1347-1351.

Developing the Student Voice Through Creative Projects: The School of Humanities Public Speaking Initiative

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Aisha Shah, Dr Jack McGowan - School of Humanities

This presentation concerns the School of Humanities public speaking initiative. The initiative currently consists of a public speaking club for students across the School during semester one, sessions from guest speakers, competition training sessions, and an opportunity for students to showcase their skills in an annual public speaking competition.

The purpose of this initiative is to utilise creativity to develop the student voice. Arguably, there is a gap in opportunities available for students to develop their skills with the support of staff outside of the traditional classroom setting; skills which students can then transfer to the classroom environment and their academic studies. This is particularly important for students who may not have the confidence to participate in more formal opportunities provided at the University.

This School of Humanities initiative achieved this in two ways. First, by advertising the opportunities to students who were looking to develop their public speaking skills. Second, by providing students with a platform to develop their soft skills in an environment where they were free to be themselves and where they could obtain support and constructive feedback on their performance in an inclusive space.

The first aim of this presentation is to discuss our experiences of running the public speaking club, and for the students involved with the project to share their experiences of participating in the initiative this year. Second, the presentation will aim to explore the extent to which the public speaking initiative was successful, and to discuss the plans for further developing this initiative.

C: Presentations (15:00-16:00)

"It takes so much time!" Dyslexic Students' Experiences of Academic Referencing

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Dr Andy Searle – Library Services

Academic referencing is a core academic skill and forms part of the marking rubrics of many written assessment tasks undertaken by students. However, from the perspective of a dyslexic student, the complexity involved in creating accurate references is daunting. In many courses across the university, academic librarians take on the role of teaching referencing and supporting students who struggle with this skill. As a relatively new academic librarian, it made sense to base teaching on evidence of what works best for dyslexic students. Unfortunately, no published research on dyslexic students' experience of referencing could be identified. This presentation reports, as far as the author is aware, the first study conducted specifically on this subject.

The research presented here took the form of qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted with current students in the schools of Nursing & Midwifery and Allied Health & Community. What came out of these interviews represents a broad view of the lived experience of dyslexic students and academic referencing. Discussion in the presentation will focus on the potential impact of students' reported experiences. In particular, the focus will be on the impact on future teaching of academic referencing within courses; how technology can be better used to support academic referencing and how support resources for referencing are provided. In addition, the presentation will discuss the wider impact of the research findings on the use of written assignments to assess dyslexic students.

"What's best for you?": Using Cripistemologies as a Grounding for Participatory Research With Communities That Are Non-verbal

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Rebecca Foster, Helen Black, Christian Wilson, Dr Emma Richardson - School of Sport and Exercise Science

Emma, Helen, Christian and Rebecca have co-authored a chapter for the Routledge Handbook of Qualitative Methods for Researching Disability in Physical Education. We seek to share our findings to colleagues. Participatory approaches are a welcome grounding for doing disability research in PE. Despite best intentions however, people that do not best communicate through traditional oral methods (e.g., some individuals with cerebral palsy, autism, D/deaf communities, verbal dyspraxia) are still excluded from research due to a reliance on 'talk' to recruit participants, gain informed consent and co-construct data. Embedding work in cripistemologies can dismantle ways of thinking and doing research using only oral methods and provide space to 'crip' research in such a way that research is informed by people that are non-verbal for people that are non-verbal. We propose two ways of engaging in cripistemologies, (1) acknowledging ableist baggage and (2) crip time. In this chapter we draw upon our experiences of living as someone that is non-verbal (Christian) and working with communities that are non-verbal (Emma, Rebecca and Helen) to show how we used these cripistemologies and provide 'tips' for researchers to ensure people that are non-verbal can also be included in participatory research.

Experiential Art Psychotherapy Group With BA Art and Psychology Students

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Ree Han, Dave Fisher – School of Arts

In addressing the Learning and Teaching needs of BA Art and Psychology students, we decided to put theory into practice and help students to bridge the gap between their nascent art and psychological practices.

Two ten-week workshops of one hour per week, were delivered to support students with continuation of Art and Psychology from second to third year; to provide them with an insight into the practice of art psychotherapy; to give them an arena to observe some of their own inter/intra psychic processes and to find support from their colleagues in meeting the challenges of a rigorous combination of artmaking and psychology theory.

The workshops began with an introduction to Art Psychotherapy practice with practical tasks designed to experience the different processes involved, including:

- Contracting and introducing through artmaking
- Working with transference and countertransference, dyads and triads in art therapy
- Psychological drawing exercises and embodied making vs. diagrammatic making
- Using AI to construct 'safe place' imagery
- Working with marginalised groups and intersectionality
- Genograms, body-mapping and other art diagrammatic work

Participants reported positive outcomes through student voice and direct feedback; students also supported each other to navigate time-management and challenging material in both art and psychology.

Sessions typically followed a check-in, overview, art making, discussion, check-out routine that not only allowed them to experience a genuine art therapy process but also created a safe space for them to bring their own material to sessions. In this way we discovered together that all groups are potentially therapeutic, even when designed with learning outcomes in mind.

Tuesday 18th June 2024

A: Presentations (10:00-11:00)

From Theory to Practice: Using Generative AI in Assessment

(Theme: Reviewing assessment practice at subject or course level to address the implications of generative AI) - Helen Hope, Warwick Trumper – School of Sport and Exercise Science

In a study by Freeman (2023), commissioned by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI), the perspectives of undergraduate students on the utilisation of artificial intelligence (AI), specifically Generative AI (GenAI), were surveyed. Collating responses from 1,250 undergraduates, the study revealed several key insights including: a significant 73% of students foresee the incorporation of GenAI into their post-university careers, while over half (53%) are already using it for academic assessments. Despite these high engagement levels, only 22% reported satisfaction with the GenAI support provided by their higher education institutions.

Recognising the need for enhanced GenAI integration and the promotion of authentic learning, this study pioneered the embedding of GenAI within both a module and as an integral part of its first assessment. A large mandatory Level 5 module which forms part of the Physical Education and Sports Coaching programme was selected. The module's assessment phase was specifically designed to integrate GenAI, facilitating a unique educational experience. Furthermore, to ensure an inclusive evaluation of GenAI's application and to accurately capture student feedback, a student representative worked alongside the module tutor on the evaluation.

This presentation highlights the outcomes derived from this innovative assessment, detailing the successes encountered and the areas for enhancement. The insights gained are poised to inform and improve the integration of GenAI in Sport at Worcester, setting a forward path for the upcoming academic year.

Reference:

Higher Education Policy Institute. (2023) *Provide or punish? Students' views on generative AI in higher education*. Available at: <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/HEPI-Policy-Note-51.pdf> (Accessed 20th April 2024)

Working Together for Student Success: A Collaborative Approach to Dissertation Support in Sport

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Kathryn Devine, Chris Cattell - School of Sport and Exercise Science, Library Services

Research (Zanin-Yost and Dillen, 2019) emphasises the benefits of academic staff and liaison librarians working collaboratively to support students' research skills and information and digital literacy. This is particularly pertinent in dissertation/independent research project modules, where students are learning new skills, working independently, have limited contact time with supervisors, and may be unaware of the additional guidance available from librarians.

To combat this, academic Chris Cattell, and school librarian Kathryn Devine, joined forces to offer a student-led dissertation 'retreat' for the former's dissertation supervisees, providing guidance on ethics, searching, referencing and data/reference management tools. The opportunity was well

received by participants, the majority of whom were 'top up' students. For staff, this collegiate way of working increased mutual confidence and communication, enabling us to provide more seamless support to students during this critical time in their studies. In this presentation, we will talk about our experiences of running the workshop, what we have learned, and the benefits to both staff and students.

Enhancing Engagement in Physiotherapy Education: An Action Research Study

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Dale Turner - School of Allied Health and Community

Background

Student engagement is a critical factor influencing educational outcomes such as qualification success rate (Kahu, 2013), attendance rate and students' perceived learning (Boulton *et al.*, 2019).

Engagement is widely categorised into behavioural, emotional (aka affective), and cognitive domains, with each domain playing a significant role in learning in education. Due to this importance Advance HE has created frameworks to enhance student engagement and influence teaching policy and practice (Evans *et al.*, 2015). Physiotherapy undergraduate education consists of a blend of practical, theoretical and simulation-based learning however engagement within Physiotherapy education is an under explored area.

Research design

Through an initial literature review, this research will follow an action research pathway. An action plan was synthesised from wider literature, this action plan will then be adopted into teaching practice within a 30-credit module on a BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy curriculum. Reflection on this process from lecturer's perspective in addition to a validated student led survey on engagement will lead to discussion around enhancing student engagement in undergraduate Physiotherapy education

Action plan

- Gamification of learning content- Focus on enjoyability playing games and quizzing and not outcome
- Blended Learning- Teaching both synchronously and asynchronously
- Teams based learning- small teams-based tasks with ground rules based on mutual respect, opportunity of involvement, and equal contribution
- Student led teaching- Students lead the task with peers providing feedback and all students complete both roles
- Ensuring access and signposting to wider support- Highlighting that for learning to be beneficial, wider context must be considered. Life outside the classroom can impact on learning.

B: Presentations (10:00-11:00)

A Sense of Belonging: A Lived Experience Voice

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Diane Asamoah, Dawn Goodall, Lisa Mauro-Bracken, Catriona Lennox, Raluca Sarbu and Joanne Lewis - School of Allied Health and Community

A group of researchers have developed a project, 'Belong and Thrive' which aims to capture the voices of students in the School of Allied Health and Community. Gathering the lived experiences of working and studying in higher education, will allow us to explore inclusion and diversity at the grassroots level and how this might impact reasons for non-continuation and attainment in higher education.

The project has two interlocking themes that will capture data through two distinct lenses. The project will conduct focus groups to capture students' perspectives on their learning journey. This provides a valuable opportunity to explore students' experience of learning and the challenges that they may face whilst studying. The researchers aim to identify what support the students think is needed to address any oppression and discrimination in the learning environment. It should offer staff an important insight into the extent to which students have a "sense of belonging" with the University of Worcester.

The second element of the project will focus on a staff perspective. An anonymous questionnaire will explore staff confidence in incorporating anti-oppressive practices, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum and their perspectives on attainment gaps and retention. The research is underway. The initial findings, progress and development of the project to date will be shared.

The Evaluation of Mature Students' Understanding of Academic Literacy

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Sandra Nwokocha –
Institute of Education

The past two decades appear to confine the appraisal of the academic literacy output to the experiences of adolescent students, with the experiences of mature students rarely mentioned. Even when mature students are mentioned, they are often portrayed in a negative light. Thus, this presentation will outline research which bridges this gap by evaluating mature students' understanding of academic literacies, taking into consideration their prior skills and by doing so, foregrounding their distinctive learning experiences. Employing the Social Constructionism approach, the research appraises multiple axes of knowing with the resultant social change. Drawing on data collected from eight mature students through semi-structured interviews, the qualitative research method option allows for an inquiry perspective that considers research participants as involved in the co-construction of knowledge. The findings show that mature students' knowledge attainment demands determination and organisational skills that balance work and study life. The resultant effect of this act is knowledge transfer, self-confidence, and better career prospects. The research contributes to the ongoing discussions by the United Kingdom Professional Standard Framework and the Staff and Educational Development Association on ways to promote participation and retention in higher education, developing an understanding of how people learn by valuing diversity and equality of opportunity for learners.

Developing the Academic Side of the Personal ACADEMIC Tutor Role

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Mary Archer, Dr Terri Grant - School of Allied Health and Community

As the title indicates, there are two elements to personal academic tutoring. One is to support students in engaging with the academic requirements of their learning and two, support their professional and personal development (University of Worcester, 2019). Students transitioning from secondary education into higher education can find it over-whelming and challenging (Cruz and Lopez, 2023). However, with the correct support, this transition can enable students to become effective adult-learners (Perander *et al.*, 2021). As healthcare professionals, many academics within the School of Allied-Health and Community are experienced in providing pastoral support but lack experience and confidence in providing the required academic support.

A 6-week bespoke personal tutoring plan was developed in conjunction with the school PAT Lead to support a student in developing their academic skills due to a series of failed assignments. Each session lasted 30 minutes, with an emphasis on the student bringing work to each tutorial to discuss. The plan was tailored to include teaching and learning theories such as Blooms taxonomy and constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003). The student was given weekly tasks to explore these

concepts further by applying them to written work and within the classroom and linking them to learning outcomes and in practice (placement). Existing university resources such as the study skills portal were utilised in a directed manner, to develop note taking, and preparation for assessment. It is hoped that this pilot can be used as structure to support other students and PATs to develop academic skills.

References:

Biggs, J. B. (2003). *Teaching for quality learning at university*. 2nd edition. Buckingham: Open University Press/Society for Research into Higher Education.

Cruz, J. and Lopes, R. (2023) 'Self-efficacy, Stress and Well-being in the transition to Higher Education', *European Psychiatry*, 66(S1), pp. S478–S479. doi: 10.1192/j.eurpsy.2023.1024

Perander, K., Londen, M. and Holm, G. (2021) "Supporting students' transition to higher education", *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, vol. 13(2), pp. 622-632.

University of Worcester (2019) *Personal Academic Tutoring Policy* [online] Available at: [Personal Academic Tutoring Policy.pdf \(worc.ac.uk\)](#) [Accessed: 29 February 2024]

C: Presentations (10:00-11:00)

Bridging Borders: Developing a Pre-arrival Online Course for International Nursing Students

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Kevin Fernandez, Sethu Sundari, Andrew Bright, Libby Symonds, Chioma Eucharia Nnajidema Obame, Linda Paija, Om Prakash Mahato – Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery

The Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery (TCSNM) started recruiting students globally in 2021 and currently has 463 international nursing students from 18 different countries. Activities promoting academic and social inclusion throughout the induction and transition period for international students increase students' feelings of institutional, academic, and social belonging (QAA, 2023). However, these activities are designed and delivered by academics, often lacking authentic student voices, which may not accurately represent the student experience.

Furthermore, due to the intensive and fast-paced nature of the nursing course, students receive essential information within the initial two weeks of their arrival in the UK. Consequently, students tend to focus on acquiring knowledge necessary for their immediate survival in their new environment. In response to this and as part of this year's Student as Academic Partners (SAP) scheme, TCSNM in partnership with the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) unit, are developing a 4-week pre-arrival online course for international nursing students. This course is intended to be completed in students' home countries, serving as a means for them to familiarise themselves with academic expectations and nursing practices in the UK.

The course is arranged thematically, allowing prospective students to explore key topics, including living, studying, and nursing in the UK, through synchronous and asynchronous learning methods. The course design is anticipatory of the needs of the student body, emphasising engagement, inclusivity, flexibility, and cultural sensitivity to ensure that students arrive at the University well-prepared for their nursing studies. This initiative aligns with the University's core objectives of fostering inclusivity and accessibility and empowering international students to develop into autonomous learners.

Reference:

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) (2023) *Supporting and Enhancing the Experience of International Students in the UK*. Gloucester: QAA

Experience and Expertise: Towards an Autism-Friendly HE Classroom

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Dr Barbara Mitra, Dr Lucy Arnold - School of Humanities

This presentation articulates the design, implementation, initial outcomes and next steps of a pilot project which engaged with a specific community of learners – those students with or awaiting an autism-diagnosis - with a view to strengthening existing support for this cohort in a way which is student-led. Emerging from the investigators' experiences of supporting these students' access to high-quality teaching and learning, this study collected qualitative responses from a sample across the School of Humanities. The project was carried out in the context of a wider scholarly exploration of the experiences of students with an autism diagnosis in accessing and participating in higher education. This included a number of recent studies which identified an increase in the rates of students disclosing autism diagnoses participating in HE (Bakker *et al.*, 2019), studies which sought to map the nature and experience of that participation for this cohort (Davis *et al.*, 2021), and studies which identified a disparity between educator attitudes towards supporting students with autism, and their classroom practice (Von Below *et al.*, 2021).

The data collected provided a rich insight into the diversity and complexity of this cohort's experiences, and the emerging themes offer a starting point for the development of a specifically autism-informed pedagogy with the potential to benefit our neurodiverse cohort more broadly. Moreover, the study illuminated the significant level of expertise and capacity for self-advocacy within the cohort identified and considers how the experience of autism within a higher education context might be helpfully reframed as expertise, capable of benefitting not only the individual student but their peers.

Workshops (11:20-12:20)**Communicate, Reflect and Empower: Walking in the Shoes of a Student: A Personal Tutor's Journey**

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Sophie Layfield, Dr Helen Holder - Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery

This workshop gives personal academic tutors (PATs) the opportunity to see life as a student. It will outline the TCSNM proposal for personal tutoring, which includes strategies/developments to enhance student engagement with the PAT system, academic support, and communication. The strategy is underpinned by University policy, student/staff feedback, research and models of personal tutoring based on disseminated practice through local and national network for example UK Advising and Tutoring (UKAT) association. The workshop will take an interactive board game approach where participants put themselves in the shoes of a student's journey on their chosen course. Staff will explore different scenarios in groups to challenge and enhance their role as a personal tutor.

Whilst the focus of the workshop is in relation to the TCSNM, use of some generic case studies with facilitate understanding of implications for wider educational practice development. The focus of the PAT role is on supporting the students' academic development and this will be reflected within the session outcomes. The workshop will include feedback, reflection, and discussion from the board game activities/scenarios to enhance personal tutoring for academic staff. The aim is for staff to

reflect on their own practice as a PAT and consider how they can increase and maintain communication with students. Evidence suggests that effective communication can increase student satisfaction and attrition, with students regarding effective communication skills as more important than curriculum knowledge, technology, having patience or multicultural competence (Menke, Stuck and Ackerson, 2018).

Small Changes for Big Impact: Sharing Learning From the Building Leadership Potential Project

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Dr Rachael Paige -
Institute of Education

This workshop shares some of the learning from the Building Leadership Potential project, a community of practice programme in the Institute of Education for anyone wanting to develop their leadership practice. The programme is context specific, focusing on values, attitudes, motivations and behaviours; working with others effectively; and the impact that can be achieved through small changes and deliberate actions. Coaching dialogue underpins the programme, including the use of action learning sets. Principles from Relational Leadership are the backdrop to the programme, including recognising how 'mundane' and day-to-day interactions can release possibilities (Cunliffe and Erikson, 2011).

Developing leaders in teams is recognised as an effective approach to ensure high quality work (Duffy-Fagan, 2021), including creating cultures where people are invested in the goals and ambitions of the institution. Wiseman (2021) recognises the significant contribution of 'impact players', not always in formal leadership but bringing attributes such as working with integrity, getting a job done, positive and keen to learn. Supporting and encouraging impact player attitudes can be a dynamic approach to strengthen the achievements of teams and this workshop will explore these ideas. Alongside, Stelter (2014) explores third generation coaching which has a focus upon values and identity to nurture leadership. This workshop will also share some of the learning around peer coaching.

Anyone interested in collaborative ways to facilitate professional development in leadership (at all levels), the use of action learning sets and how we build communities of practice will find this workshop of interest.

References:

Cunliffe, A. and Eriksen, M. (2011). Relational Leadership. *Human Relations*. 64 (11), pp. 1425–1449.

Duffy-Fagan, M., Newman, L. and Leggett, N. (2021) Critically reflective mentoring within team-based leadership: 'having conversations that matter', *International Journal of Leadership in Education*. DOI: 10.1080/13603124.2021.2006798

Stelter, R. (2014) Third-generation coaching – striving towards value-orientated and collaborative dialogues. *International Coaching Psychology Review*. 9(1), pp. 33-48.

Wiseman, L. (2021). *Impact Players: How to take the lead, play bigger and multiply impact*. HaperCollins Publisher

5 Quick Wins for People With Text Disabilities

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Allie Taylor, Mark Harwood-Browne, Madalene George, Beth Connors, Katie Chambers – Library Services, Disability & Dyslexia Service

Many students have difficulty reading the printed word. This workshop looks at some of the free tools which make reading more accessible. We will look at immersive reader, ways to customise a browser, and some of the impact of Bookshare on print disabled students. Please bring a laptop or tablet to make the most of the session.

Workshop session: Empowering the Next Generation: Tailoring Gen AI for Student (14:15-15:15)

Empowering the Next Generation: Tailoring GenAI for Student Success in Higher Education

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Helen Hope, Kate Courage, Rachel Kyte, Melanie Jarman, Joanne Lewis, Martin Whiteside - School of Sport and Exercise Science

In their 2023 study, Chan & Lee explore the diverse perspectives, knowledge, and concerns regarding Generative AI (GenAI) among academic staff and students across different generations within Higher Education (HE). Their findings reveal a generational divide: Gen X and Gen Y educators are primarily concerned with the ethical and pedagogical implications of GenAI, fearing an overreliance among students. In contrast, Gen Z students view GenAI as a beneficial tool to enhance their learning experience. This research underscores a potential discord between the values and beliefs of HE academic staff and their students.

Building upon this foundation, Villarreal *et al.* (2023) propose a structured approach to integrating GenAI into HE, focusing on Policy, Ethics, Education, Collaboration, and Evaluation. This framework aims to bridge the identified gap between staff and student perspectives on GenAI by addressing different areas of work.

This workshop is designed to explore two pivotal areas identified by Villarreal *et al.* (2023): Collaboration and Education. It promises an engaging, interactive experience that scrutinises the role of GenAI in HE from multiple angles, with contributions from academic staff, Library Services, SU Help and Advice, Centre for Academic English and Skills and IT Services. Participants will be encouraged to critically evaluate their beliefs and values concerning GenAI, gain some understanding of key GenAI models, and reflect on their application within their academic practice. By concentrating on these themes, the session aims to strengthen academic support and practice, fostering a more inclusive and effective approach to generative AI in the educational landscape.

References:

Chan, C. K. Y. and Lee, K. W. (2023) *The AI Generation Gap: Are Gen Z students more interested in adopting generative AI such as ChatGPT in teaching and learning than their Gen X and Millennial Generation teachers?* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.48550/ARXIV.2305.02878>.

Michel-Villarreal, R. *et al.* (2023) Challenges and Opportunities of Generative AI for Higher Education as Explained by ChatGPT. *Education Sciences*. 13(9), p. 856. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13090856>

A: Presentations (15:15-16:15)

Fostering Sustainability Awareness: Innovative Assessment and Student Engagement

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Katy Boom, Sian Evans, Dr Heather Barrett

The Introduction to Sustainability module offers a transformative learning experience, combining knowledge enhancement with personal and societal exploration. It employs authentic learning activities, expert witness sessions, and student agency in curriculum design to enhance student engagement and understanding.

Students collaborate on an innovative assessment, designing and implementing activities for the University's 'Go Green Week' (GGW). This assessment bridges formal and informal curricula, enriching student engagement. Enhancements include evidence-based rationale, transparent marking, and support for diverse student needs. The GGW assessment achieves high pass rates, demonstrating its effectiveness.

The second assessment requires students to critically review expert witness sessions and reflect on their sustainability learning journey. This approach encourages deep engagement with the material and fosters key skills such as critical thinking, reflection, and self-directed learning.

Over time, the teaching team has made several revisions to the assessment structure to enhance student experience and satisfaction. These include introducing a more rigorous review structure, enhanced scaffolding, and specific support for reflective writing. These changes have led to higher grades and positive feedback from students.

Overall, the module's approach to teaching and assessment aligns well with the goals of promoting deep engagement with the material and fostering key graduate attributes. It exemplifies how assessment can be designed to support and enhance learning to support retention and continuation.

Podcasts: A Dynamic Tool for Authentic Assessment

(Theme: Reviewing assessment practice at subject or course level to address the implications of generative AI) - Kirsty Fraser, Michelle Parvin - School of Allied Health and Community

This presentation will explore the use of student-produced podcasts as an innovative assessment method in health, well-being, and community courses. The talk will showcase the direct and indirect benefits of using podcasts as a dynamic and inclusive approach to assessment. By sharing students' experiences, the presenters will illustrate how podcast-based assessments enhance learning experiences by engaging students in an in-depth exploration of course content, knowledge, communication, and group work.

This approach promotes critical thinking skills and fosters a sense of community among learners, in line with the conference theme. Moreover, the presentation will address how podcasting can help to reduce the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) in the assessment process. We can encourage genuine interactions by integrating podcasts into assessments, avoiding over-reliance on automated processes and ensuring a more nuanced and personalised assessment method. The presentation will give valuable insights, and practical takeaways for implementation in their course and module contexts. As we strive to build opportunities for "Authentic Assessment," integrating podcasts has emerged as a collaborative, engaging, and meaningful educational experience for students.

Supporting Students Undertaking Systematic Reviews: Creating a Cross-institutional Community of Practice for Librarians and Information Professionals

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Kathryn Devine – Library Services

Systematic or systematised reviews are an increasingly popular methodology in student dissertations and independent research projects, particularly in courses where gaining ethical approval for primary research may be complex, as well being an integral part of many PhD projects. Such methodologies can be a steep learning curve for students, involving the development of advanced search strategies, management of search results, extracting data and using PRISMA. For librarians, meeting this increasing support need from students means ensuring that their own skills are comprehensive and current.

Conversations with librarian networks made clear that this situation is not unique to the University of Worcester, and that information specialists felt they would welcome the opportunity to call upon colleagues across institutions for help and advice. To that end, librarians from Worcester, Surrey, Lancaster, and Aston universities joined forces to set up an SR Community of Practice on Discord to provide a space to share best practice and ask questions. This presentation discusses the creation and progress of the CoP, currently comprising of almost 200 members, and how it is helping to support us in supporting students.

B: Presentations (15:15-16:15)

How Nursing Students Use Different Visual Arts to Strengthen Learning and Communication When Undertaking an International Elective to India

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Alison Lewis, Cristina Muradore, Angel Moolan, Abigail Aris - Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery

Since summer 2022 the Three Counties School of Nursing and Midwifery (TCSNM), in collaboration with the International Experience Team and Pravara Institute of Medical Sciences in India, has been able to offer elective summer placements to its students.

This lifechanging experience takes students on a journey into Social Health and Rural Development from the Indian perspective. The program allows them to gain invaluable insights into the Medical & Health Sciences Education System and Alternative Systems of Medicine such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Homeopathy and Tribal Medicine.

Students document their time in India through a wide range of mediums, including social media, photo albums and videos. These have become invaluable tools to communicate with the hosts to demonstrate the students' academic learning and cultural experiences on this elective, strengthening the support for future students.

On returning to the UK, the students have always positively and actively engaged with the TCSNM to support the promotion of the program to their peers. Their active participation plays a big role in ensuring the program always recruits at capacity. Co-delivery of the pre-departure sessions for the next cohorts offers a showcase opportunity to present what the program meant for them. Use of a student video illustrates how powerful the visual arts can be, to communicate some of the experiences and opportunities offered by this elective.

An Interdisciplinary Simulated Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Jenny Dale, Alison Lewis, Sue Poultney – Three Counties School of Nursing & Midwifery, School of Allied Health and Community

The Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is a key mechanism for safeguarding children in the UK and brings together professionals alongside family members to make decisions about a child's future health, safety, and development. Discussion between agencies attending conferences has been found to be lacking purpose (SCIE, 2016). In seeking to improve students' ability to apply skills and knowledge to practical problems by way of "doing" (behavioural) we used Kolb's (2014) experiential approach and engaged social work and child nursing students in a simulated Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC).

To develop a "collaborative practice-ready" workforce the World Health Organisation advocate the use of interdisciplinary education (WHO, 2010) which brings together students from different disciplines in learning. Research on IDL in the UK child protection context remains limited and as such evaluating such initiatives is important. The pretest posttest design of this study, to be presented, gathered student responses via an online questionnaire, both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Data was analysed in line with Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis (2006) with compelling results. Data capture continues with future cohorts, so we anticipate this being an evolving project responding to student need.

Student feedback attests:

'I understand more about how the meeting works, my role and it's a great positive to be able to use the skills I've learnt today when I qualify'

Resource Lists as Liberation: Amplifying Lesser Heard Voices in Education

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) - Stuart Gallagher, Lucy Gibson, Mia Griffin, Emma Tully, Sethu Sundari, Sarah Purcell, Kate Courage, Dr Ellie Hill - Institute of Education

Education Studies BA (Hons) was redesigned and revalidated in 2023. The course educates the educators. This includes championing educational equity: dominant voices get challenged and lesser heard, minoritised voices are amplified.

One arena for this contest is the role education plays in a sustainable planet.

This presentation tells the story of a current Students as Academic Partners (SAP) project. It is a collaboration between Education Studies students and staff, Library Services and the university's Decolonising the Curriculum group.

The project has two specific goals:

- to compile a resource list for Sustainable Futures: Educating for a Shared World, which is a Level 5 Education Studies module that will run for the first time in academic year 2024-25;
- to reflect on the process of letting students learn how to produce a resource list that is generated by them and reflects the voices, views, and values that they wish to contribute to the academic discussion and debate round education, sustainability and the Anthropocene.

In this presentation, the project's contributors will tell the story of its progress: from initial collaboration to greater distribution of responsibility for progressing the project towards its intended

outcomes, to finding a way to navigate equality, diversity and inclusion from an educationalist perspective.

The presentation invites other courses to consider similar collaborations and will inform them of the possible breakthroughs for student leadership and learning.

C: Presentations (15:15-16:15)

Supporting Heutagogic Learners in Postgraduate Distance Learning Programmes

(Theme: Strengthening academic support and communication with students) – Dr Colin Wood –
School of Sport and Exercise Science

Dr Colin Wood presents the findings of a research study that explores the relationship between heutagogy (self-determined learning) and postgraduate study. Through interviews with six former students, it considers experiences of heutagogic learning during post-graduate study on a distance learning course. The study finds that mid-career professionals were capable of studying within a form of higher education that allowed them to define their own curriculum, to create their own learning map and to use academic support as a compass for their learning.

The research identified strengths of this approach including high levels of student agency, ownership and control, and the positive value given to prior knowledge and ongoing professional practice. At the same time, it found that heutagogic study was not easy as it was characterised by fear, a heightened sense of personal responsibility and concerns about imposter-syndrome. As the course progressed these morphed into a sense of pride and ownership, and a validation of their professional experience and embodied understandings of outdoor learning. Thus, the presentation explores the centrality of the postgraduate learner within their studies and the ways that support and communication with students can be adapted to allow self-determined learning.

Student-led Evaluation of the Refreshed Study Skills Portal

(Theme: Improving student retention and continuation) - Kate Courage, Michelle Malomo, Dr Darren Cooper, Anastasia Kennett, Libby Wyre, Mae Doody, Sue Baylis, Allie Taylor, Sarah Purcell, Madalene George – Library Services, Institute of Education, School of Sport and Exercise Science, School of Humanities

Building students' confidence in core academic skills, such as reflection, criticality and time management, can play a role in improving student retention and success (the University's number one priority) promoting student performance and lowering stress (Hsu and Goldsmith, 2021; Kimbark *et al.*, 2017; Mason, 2019 and Perander *et al.*, 2021).

The Study Skills Portal was created in the summer of 2023, to create an engaging, asynchronous resource, accessible 24/7, to support study skills teaching, both in modules and in self-directed learning, and support students' holistic self-care and well-being. It also has a Starting at University section, to provide support pre-arrival and during Welcome Week.

The portal had input from the Study Skills Community of Practice (staff from all academic schools and key professional services departments) during the initial development, but student feedback was needed, to develop it further. Student recommendations, gathered in this SAP project, will be considered, integrated and implemented by the new Community of Practice.

The conference presentation, delivered jointly with SAP students, will discuss the project's findings and recommendations after surveying over 700 students, across all academic levels and Schools, and conducting focus groups. We will also evaluate the effectiveness of the mixed-methods project, the improvements it looks likely to generate, and the value it has brought to the student participants.

Engaging Our Alumni: Using Past Experiences to Improve the Future

(Theme: 'Closing the loop' on student feedback) - Jennifer Bray - School of Allied Health and Community

The fully online Postgraduate Certificate in Person-Centred Dementia Studies has an ever-expanding group of graduates across the UK and beyond, with students tending to be older and completing their studies alongside full-time jobs. The teaching team held an alumni event to encourage former students to reconnect and meet with those from different modules. More than just a nice gesture, such events are key to ensuring the future of the PGCert.

Firstly, it valued and celebrated the alumni for who they are. An update on the latest developments in the field of dementia was provided, enabling people to continue their learning process and ensuring that they benefited from the event. The alumni were also invited to share how they have put their learning into practice and made a difference for the people they support.

Secondly, it reflected on experiences of studying the PGCert. The alumni fed back on different aspects of the course, enabling the teaching team to identify areas for improvement that will benefit future students.

Thirdly, it looked to the future. Discussion considered the use of artificial intelligence, how this may impact the PGCert, and what guidance may be useful to support students. Ways to promote the PGCert to attract new students were also explored, including being able to share alumni stories and experiences. Discussion was also held around a future Master's to ensure it would meet student needs, and potentially engage existing alumni in further study.

For further information please contact

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